

IN THE CLAIMS:

Please replace the claims with the claims provided in the listing below wherein status, amendments, additions and cancellations are indicated.

1. - 12. (Cancelled)

13. (New) A rotational shearing filter comprising:
- an axially extending housing;
 - a plurality of spaced-apart, coaxial, annular, hollow filter disks disposed in said housing;
 - a rotatable central drive shaft penetrating said filter disks;
 - a plurality of axially displaceable shearing elements connected to said drive shaft and rotatable therewith;
 - said shearing elements being positioned adjacent to annular surfaces of said filter disks in the axial direction of said housing; and
 - said shearing elements including spacers that axially displace said shearing elements responsive to thermally induced changes in said housing.
- 14 (New) The rotational shearing filter of claim 13, wherein said spacers are annular members that enclose said drive shaft.

15. (New) The rotational shearing filter of claim 14, wherein said annular spacers are arranged between adjacent shearing elements, said spacers comprising a material having a coefficient of heat expansion that matches a coefficient of heat expansion of said housing.
16. (New) The rotational shearing filter of claim 15 further comprising at least one pre-tension spring enclosing said drive shaft, said spring being disposed against at least one shearing element of said plurality of shearing elements and biasing said at least one shearing element towards other shearing elements of said plurality of shearing elements.
17. (New) The rotational shearing filter of claim 16, further comprising a pair of opposing pre-tension springs enclosing said drive shaft, said plurality of shearing elements being disposed between said pair of opposing springs.
18. (New) The rotational shearing filter of claim 16, wherein one of said plurality of shearing elements is positioned against a stop structure disposed on said drive shaft.

19. (New) The rotational shearing filter of claim 16, wherein:
- said annular spacers comprise sliding bushes that enclose said drive shaft;
 - said spacers being either opposing end spacers or spacers disposed between said end spacers;
 - said shearing elements being either opposing end shearing elements or shearing elements disposed between said end shearing elements;
 - each spacer being disposed between one of said plurality of filter disks and an adjacent one of said plurality of shearing elements; and
 - said end spacers being disposed between said end shearing elements and said housing.
20. (New) The rotational shearing filter of claim 19, wherein said end spacers are connected to said housing and the remaining of said spacers are connected to said filter disks.
21. (New) The rotational shearing filter of claim 13, wherein said drive shaft includes at least one axially extending groove or rib and said shearing elements include a profile adapted for interlocking with said groove or rib in said shaft.

22. (New) The rotational shearing filter of claim 13, wherein said housing and said drive shaft comprise materials having different coefficients of thermal expansion.

23. (New) The rotational shearing filter of claim 22, wherein said housing comprises plastic and said drive shaft comprises metal.

24. (New) The rotational shearing filter of claim 13, wherein said spacers comprise interior projections or receiving depressions of said housing that extend with said shearing elements into a sliding catch that axially displaces said spacers.